



BLM NEWS RELEASE

U.S. Department of the Interior • Bureau of Land Management • Washington, D.C., Office • 1849 C Street N.W. • Washington, D.C.

Bureau of Land Management
For immediate release: Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Contact: Tom Gorey
(202) 912-7420

BLM Seeks Research Proposals to Develop New, Innovative Techniques to Suppress Population Growth of Wild Horse and Burro Herds

Request for Applications calls for effective contraception and sterilization research to ensure healthy herds, healthy rangelands

As part of its continuing efforts to improve the national Wild Horse and Burro Program, and in response to a recent study of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), the Bureau of Land Management is seeking research proposals to develop new or improve existing ways of controlling the population growth of wild horses and burros that roam public lands in the West.

“We remain committed to making substantial improvements to the national Wild Horse and Burro Program and we know that some of the best ideas for effective contraception techniques will come from veterinarians, scientists, universities, pharmaceutical companies, and other researchers outside of the BLM,” said Joan Guilfoyle, Division Chief of the program. “The development and use of more effective methods to reduce population growth rates will lessen the need to remove animals from the range and improve the health of public rangelands, conserve wildlife habitat, and save taxpayers money.”

The BLM has issued a Request for Applications (RFA) to alert veterinarians, scientists, universities, pharmaceutical companies, and other researchers of the BLM’s need to develop new, innovative techniques and protocols for implementing population growth-suppression methods. Specifically, the BLM is interested in finding experts to develop new or refine current techniques and protocols for either contraception or the spaying/neutering of on-range male and female wild horses and burros. The methods may be surgical, chemical, pharmaceutical, or mechanical (such as intrauterine devices). The submission deadline for applications is May 7, 2014.

The President’s proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2015 includes \$80.2 million for the BLM’s Wild Horse and Burro Program, a \$2.8 million increase over the FY 2014 level. The additional funds will focus on research of population-control methods.

The BLM estimates that 40,605 wild horses and burros (about 33,780 horses and 6,825 burros) are roaming BLM-managed rangelands in 10 Western states, based on the latest data available, compiled as of February 28, 2013. Wild horses and burros have virtually no natural predators and their herd sizes can double about every four years, as confirmed by the recent NAS study that urged the BLM to make wider use of fertility control and found that, on average, the BLM undercounts the Westwide population of wild horses and burros by 20 to 30 percent.

The link to the solicitation can be found at: [http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=wild horse](http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=wild%20horse)
(The funding opportunity number is [L14AS00048](#).)

The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land, the most of any Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of subsurface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM’s mission is to manage and conserve the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations under our mandate of multiple-use and sustained yield. In Fiscal Year 2013, the BLM generated \$4.7 billion in receipts from public lands.